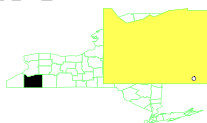


PETER COOPER

NEW YORK

EPA ID# NYD980530265



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 31
Cattaraugus County
Gowanda

Site Description

The Peter Cooper site consists of an inactive waste disposal area and some areas of contaminated soil at the former Peter Cooper Corporation (PCC) factory in Gowanda, Cattaraugus County, New York. The site surroundings include Cattaraugus Creek to the north-northeast and an associated wetland to the west, residences to the southwest and south, and the remainder of the former PCC factory to the east-southeast. The western portion of the waste disposal area is on property owned by New York State Electric and Gas, and the eastern portion is located on property previously owned by PCC. The site is currently owned by Jimcar Development Inc.

PCC and its predecessor, Eastern Tanners Glue Company, manufactured animal glue in Gowanda from 1904 until 1972, and industrial adhesives from 1972 until the plant closed in 1985. Between 1925 and October 1970, PCC used the northwest portion of the property to pile sludges remaining after the animal-glue manufacturing process. These wastes, known as cookhouse sludge because of a cooking cycle that occurred just prior to extraction of the glue, are derived from chrome-tanned hides obtained from tanneries.

Numerous investigations conducted since 1981 have shown the cover material to be eroded away and waste exposed in some locations, the concrete retaining wall has collapsed, and leachate seeps are discharging into the Creek. The waste material has been shown to contain elevated levels of chromium, arsenic, zinc, and some organic compounds.

Site Responsibility: The site is currently being addressed through Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 09/25/97

Final Listing NPL:03/6/98

Threats and Contaminants



Currently, the levels of arsenic, chromium and zinc detected in the soil, leachate and surface water where exposures could occur do not represent a public health concern. Much higher levels of contaminants are present, however, in the subsurface soil. Continued deterioration of the site cover could allow people to be exposed to higher levels of contaminants in the soil, surface water and leachate, and consequently, could pose a health concern in the future.

Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in three stages: immediate action and containment for the source area (landfill) and a long-term remedial action focusing on addressing exposure pathways outside the source area.

Response Action Status



Immediate Actions: A containment wall has been constructed to contain exposed waste at the bank of the Cattaraugus Creek, thereby eliminating direct contact with the waste and leachate by fishermen and other recreational users of this popular fishing area.



Consent.

Entire Site: A Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) work plan was prepared by an EPA contractor and submitted to EPA. The RI/FS work plan was then used during negotiations with the PRPs for possible implementation under an Administrative Order on

Negotiations with the PRPs concerning an Administrative Order on Consent were unsuccessful. Therefore, on April 5, 2000, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO). The UAO called for Respondents, the Wilhelm Enterprises Corporation (former owner/operator), the New York State Electric & Gas Company (the current owner of a part of the Site), and fourteen generators of hazardous substances that were disposed of at the Site to perform a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The UAO became effective on May 1, 2000. Letters of Intent to Comply were submitted by the PRPs on May 9, 2000. The Remedial Investigation field work was initiated by the PRPs contractor on September 25, 2000. At the conclusion of the investigation, EPA will select a final cleanup remedy.

Site Facts: On October 24, 1996, New York State Electric and Gas signed an Administrative Order on Consent with EPA and agreed to construct erosion control measures, including a retaining wall, in order to prevent a mass release of waste materials from the landfill into Cattaraugus Creek. This action was initiated on January 13, 1997 and was completed on January 31, 1997.

Cleanup Progress



Construction of the retaining wall has made the Peter Cooper site safer. Field work for implementation of the RI was initiated on September 25, 2000.

Site Repository



Gowanda Village Hall, 27 E. Main Street, Gowanda, New York

Town of Persia, Town Hall, 8W. Main Street, Gowanda, New York

William Seneca Building, 1490 Route 438, Irving, New York